



Enhancing Trust

March 16, 2026

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson,

Greetings from the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA). Thank you for your leadership in the U.S. House of Representatives and for your many years defending the principles of faith and freedom that undergird our nation.

With that mind, I would like to draw your attention to the Clergy Act (H.R. 227), bipartisan legislation sponsored by Reps. Vince Fong (R-Calif.) and Mike Thompson (D-Calif.) that is ready for action on the House Floor. By supporting retirement security, this bill would aid many pastors and other clergy who serve in roles of critical support for communities around our nation.

Unfortunately, many clergy choose early in their ministries to apply for an exemption from the Social Security system. This is generally an irreversible selection, and, as they advance in their career and look ahead to retirement, some pastors come to wish they hadn't made that choice.

The Clergy Act would allow a temporary window for pastors to revoke their exemption and re-enter the Social Security system beginning in 2029. Of note, like other workers, pastors opting back in would still need to pay into Social Security for the equivalent of 10 years (40 quarters) before being eligible to receive benefits. Also, the bill would task the IRS and the Social Security Administration with crafting a plan for notifying clergy members of their eligibility for this opportunity.

This legislation is reasonable, and, having heard numerous stories of those affected, I know it will be a breath of fresh air for many faith leaders. I am grateful that Chairman Jason Smith led the House Ways and Means Committee in advancing H.R. 227 by a 40-0 vote in December. I encourage the full House to approve this important bill.

Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability

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Thank you for your attention to this matter. Again, I am grateful for your leadership

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Martin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Michael Martin
ECFA President & CEO